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WHY VOTE AT ALL IN '72?

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WHY VOTE AT ALL IN '72?

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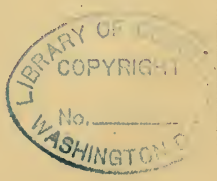
"Nothing can be imagined more dastardly than the disposition of those men who despair of their country. They make me think I see a graceless son, after supporting a little while the languid head of his sick mother, toss her back upon the bed and say, 'She will die, and why then should I give myself any trouble about her?'"



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DEDICATION.

To the "Business men of New York," comprising more than half the voting population, who created this great city; and who, if they please, may give it an honest, efficient government, this pamphlet is dedicated, with sentiments of high respect and veneration, by

The Author.

PREFACE.

It has become the fashion, of late, among respectable people, in New York City, to declare that we are ruled by knaves, because the *majority of the people are corrupt;* and this declaration often comes, with sad and earnest tones, from the lips of good and truthful men. "The majority of the people corrupt!" Think of that impeachment, New Yorker!

Do the sages, who so often repeat this assertion, seriously reflect whither it leads? Perhaps not!

But if, [when weighed in the scales of Equity and Truth] the assertion be found incorrect in fact, the thought naturally arises: Why, then, do good men so constantly think it, and say it?

May it not be because of that habit of human nature which leads men continually to suggest plausible excuses for conscious neglect of duty? As the mind of a Procrastinator is lulled to insidious ease by the thought: "Oh, it will do as well to-morrow," so, may not the good men of New York be fatally lulling their consciences to rest, by thus shifting over,

upon an *imagined* majority of bad citizens, the public crime, which is in truth their own ?

Let us fairly investigate the causes ; and may Heaven, ever on the side of right, lead us to the Truth. Thus, lifted out of old ruts of thought, the minds of the people will come at once to the public disease, and the real remedy may then be sought.

For be sure, when conviction once settles on the public heart, and the great honest mass of the People know where the trouble actually lies, then the mighty rush of *Reform*, will be like the leap of a chip into the foam of Niagara. There will be no stopping it, half way down !

NEW YORK, July, 1872.

WHY VOTE AT ALL
IN '72?

After teaching of our duty to *God*, it is proper to teach that which we owe to our *Country*. For our Country is, as it were, a secondary god, and the first and greatest parent. It is to be preferred to Parents, Wives, Children, Friends, and all things, God only excepted. And if our Country perishes, it is as impossible to save an Individual as to preserve one of the fingers of a mortified hand."—HIEROCLES.*

The better to comprehend our Social and Political status, by contrast, the reader is invited to a rapid survey of the past two-and-a-half centuries. The story is short, simple, instructive!

Let the Record be divided into three eras:

Era of 1614, . . First settlement of New York.
Era of 1776, . . Birth of the Government.
Era of 1872, . . The present time.

* Of his own suggestions, the writer of this pamphlet expects —what is deserved—an indifferent perusal, or may be none at all. But, for these golden sentences quoted, *in large type*, these Voices from the Illustrious Dead, he prays they may be graven on the minds of New Yorkers, by indelible Memory. The dead can have no ill designs upon us, my countrymen.

ERA OF 1614:

The New Yorker, of to-day, can hardly picture to himself the scene, on this spot, at the epoch of 1614. Instead of these broad avenues, we now see, lined with stately palaces of marble, stone, and iron—the narrow path of the Indian hunter, over-arched with tangled foliage, wound along through the woods, and crossed over hills and little streams. The lively squirrel darted among the branches, deer bounded in the forest, and birds whistled their merry songs all day long in the trees. We may imagine picturesque groups of wigwams, nestled in foliage on the hillsides, looking down upon the broad and silent Hudson; with here and there a bark-canoe, darting out from some shady inlet to fish or to paddle on the water. All was nature! rude, wild, undressed nature!

On this spot our forefathers planted themselves, and here they established a home in the New World!

We may imagine their first political gathering, held beneath the sheltering branches of some majestic oak. There the whole community would meet, for public deliberation. Every adult citizen would be a self-elected "representative" to this primeval Congress. We cannot conceive of any man being absent, save from unrelenting sickness.

The "ballot" was a cherished boon then, Reader. Please take note of this, and let us pass on to the epoch of 1776.

ERA OF 1776:

More than a century and a half had passed away, since our forefathers, landing on the coast, had e

their primitive huts within sound of the splashing of the waves. But the pioneer arm had wrought a mighty change, inland from the sea. Forests had been levelled —roadways cut—bridges built—villages, towns, and cities created in the midst of lonely solitudes. Civilization had spread abroad—on the East, to Cape Cod and Penobscot Bay—on the North, to the St. Lawrence and the great inland lakes—on the West, to the Ohio and Alleghany mountains—on the South, to the Floridas and the Gulf of Mexico.

That primitive Congress, held beneath an oak, had given way to numerous elective bodies, in convenient towns and cities, where the peoples' representatives assembled, to protest against rude injustice on the part of mother England. The patriots' "humble petition," spurned at the British court, had given place to angry denunciation, and violent opposition. The Royal troops had fired on the people—they, by the voice of Congress, had severed political ties which bound them to England —and thus opens the epoch of 1776.

The storm of war, passing over the Atlantic from the old world, presently swept along the American shores. Its smoky clouds hovered over hitherto peaceful villages and towns. The roar of cannon, and the rattle of musketry echoed on the hill-tops, and along the valleys of the New World, frightening the eagle from his tree-top, and the timid deer from his quiet sleep beside the lake.

The voice of the people, raised in a thousand townships, summoned bone and sinew to the front, and the fairest talent to the "Continental Congress." And what was all this about? The "ballot"—the ballot and its God-given privileges. Where the man who staid away

from political duty at the epoch of "seventy-six?" The *ballot* was a cherished boon then, Reader. Please take note of this, and let us pass on to the epoch of 1872.

"The House of Commons ought to be the people in one room." *

ERA OF 1872:

What a mighty change is here! Cast your eye abroad, Reader. The native Indian has passed away. He dwells with the "Great Spirit," in the hunting-grounds beyond the sky. Civilization inhabits the North-East and the South-West. Great cities, inland, dot the hill-sides, the valleys and the plains. The iron-horse runs his seven-days journey from Atlantic to Pacific—sweeping the snows of the Sierras and the leaves of the Alleghanies. The merchant prince eats his Sunday dinner at home in New York, to-day, and dines next Sunday with his son in the Golden City. Bridges of wire span the chasms of Niagara. Mercantile navies enliven rivers, lakes and seas. Electric-sparks dart along the bed of old Atlantic, saluting its shells, its fishes and its silent caves—flashing the word of intelligence from continent to continent. Enchantment is abroad—and the glories of the present outrival the fancies of Arabian tales.

Look at New York, Reader! Where are the winding-paths of the Indian-hunter now? Where the wigwam, and the bark-canoe? Gone with the dead and forgotten past. And, in their place, has arisen the city of merchants. To-day its local news is bulletined to

* Burgh's Political Disquisitions, vol. 2, p. 37.

the World. New York is the merchant's home. He built it, and fashioned it, and made it what it is. Trade and Commerce feed its people, from the news-boy to the millionaire. Out from its warehouses, manufactories, and stores, pour the golden streams of material life. Walk along the spinal cord of the city—Broadway—and up and down its great arteries, East and West, and tell us, Reader, is the voice of Business-men potential? Let them but speak their wish, and it is law.

And what have they done, for the age, and humanity?

They have opened the city's arms to the persecuted of every clime.

They have lifted the emigrant from foreign political slavery to American citizenship.

They have educated the ignorant, gratis.

They have doubled the wages of labor.

They have frowned down tyranny, everywhere.

They have poured out golden charity, in streams.

They have written the noun "merchant" in the vocabulary of "Princes."

They have spread our flag on every sea.

They have cherished Freedom, Religion and the Arts.

They have peacefully conquered the friendship of the World.

But the ballot, Reader, the ballot! How about the ballot in seventy-two?

"The highest honor that can be attained by any man, is that which is voluntarily conferred on him by his countrymen; and the greatest good he can do, as well as the most accept-

able to God, is that which he does to his country." *

POLITICAL NEW YORK IN 1872.

We are brought face to face with the political present. Let it be examined from the standpoint of to-day. It is asserted:

First: That our Executive is venal.

Second: That our Legislature is bought with money every year.

Third: That our Judiciary is corrupted to the core.

Fourth: That the Treasury is robbed of millions.

Fifth: That we are governed by a foreign-rabble.

Sixth: That reform is hopeless.

The first and last of these, time will prove unfounded.

But let us not wrangle about the truth of these assertions. Some believe them less than truth. Others think them partly true. No man declares them false in whole.

It is not the purpose of this pamphlet to make individual charges against any man or any party. Corrupt rulers and corrupt parties both spring from the people, and could not exist without the majority's consent, active or passive.

"I resolve to speak ill of no man whatever, not even in a matter of truth; but rather by some means excuse the faults I hear charged upon others, and, upon proper occasions, speak all the good I know of everybody."—*Dr. Franklin.*†

* Machiavel. † Works of: By Jared Sparks, vol. 1, p. 105.

That the people have elected bad representatives is known at home, and noted abroad. And we have suffered at home and abroad for the act. How have we suffered at home, Reader? Let the working classes testify. It is they who suffer most:

First: Bankrupt Savings-Banks—robbing the widow of her mite, and the poor man of his savings.

Second: A Corrupt Judiciary. An honest citizen, after the labor of the day, escorts his wife or sweetheart abroad in the evening. She is insulted in a car, or on the street. He resents it. The ruffian murders him on the spot. A thrill of horror runs through the public. But the courts may be bought with money, and there is no redress. Whose turn comes next, citizens?

Third: Increased Taxation: The landlord adds the additional tax to the rent. Result: the poor man pays $25 a month, instead of $12, and the money is stolen by the men he elects.

It is amusing to hear owners of property talk about the taxes *they* pay. As if they paid the taxes. What are the facts? When taxes increase, the owner adds the tax to the rent. Thus the renter appears to pay it. But he does not, in fact—for he adds the increased rent to the price of his goods. Thus they *who buy the commodity* pay the taxes—in other words, the people. This is why all the people (property-holders or not), should have the power to vote.

Fourth: City debt doubled. The increased interest must be paid. How is it done? Store-rents go up—fuel and provisions double—taxes ditto. The laborer pays two prices for coal, flour, meat, potatoes, cloth-

ing and rent. And the money builds palaces, gardens, and surburban villas for the men he elects.

Then the people are flattered with the sophistry that high prices exist because of war and paper money. This is stuff and nonsense. Does war exist? Are silver and copper paper money? Yet try what you can buy cheaper, with silver or copper.

Moreover, they have paper-money in our neighboring city of Boston, and a man may live there at half the price. The reason is, they have an honest government—we have not!

"It is a great evil in a State when there is not power to curb offenders."—*U. Emmius.**

EUROPEAN COMMENTS.

But turn your eyes abroad, Reader! How do we suffer there?

See what the continental papers say of us:

[From the Berlin *Kreuz-Zeitung.*]

"There is so much rottenness in the management of financial affairs in the United States, that lovers of an honest government have long since begun to look with contempt upon that unwieldy and motley conglomeration of commonwealths called by deluded liberal enthusiasts "the great republic." The attention of these enthusiasts is hereby called to the astounding developments concerning the immense peculations of certain

* "De Republica Atheniensium." See the "Thesaurius Græcarum Antiquitatum," vol. 4, page 434. At Astor Library.

high functionaries in New York city, which we publish in another column. These functionaries have defrauded the city not of hundreds of thousands, but of many millions of dollars. Almost the entire press of the city calls these high-stationed officials plunderers and thieves, and imperiously demands that they should give an account of their doings; but these parties treat that demand with contempt, because they are backed up by an immense mob, which enables them to carry all elections.

"This subject furnishes to all sagacious men food for reflection, and the inference is easily arrived at. Let us commend it especially to the ranters in our Chamber, who are always ready to draw unpleasant parallels between our country and the United States. Let them also bear in mind the immense peculations committed in France under the mob government presided over by Lawyer Gambetta."

[From the Vienna *Vaterland.*]

"How do the *Neue Freie Presse* and its followers relish these disclosures? What a lovely state of affairs in the best, nay the only true republic! We suppose the most rabid Prussian could not wish poor France a worse fate than to imitate American institutions in every particular. From what we can gather from American letters, New York has been plundered more mercilessly by her chosen leaders, than Paris was by the greedy robbers of the Commune."

The Paris *Gaulois* seems to have special information about the public frauds. It estimates the whole amount that was embezzled at several hundred millions of dollars, and comments on the subject in a manner decidedly hostile to republican institutions.

The Pesth *Lloyd* says that "for a long time past it has been disgusted with American affairs. Honest functionaries there are a rarity. High and low both seem to be equally intent upon filling their pockets from the public treasury, principally to have money enough for purchasing votes for a re-election."

[From the Augsburger *Post-Zeitung*.]

"The laws of the American republic are such as to render the deserved punishment of these men (the public plunderers) a matter of considerable difficulty—nay, almost an impossibility; the more so as the judges are all politicians, and elected by the ignorant rabble. So the plunderers seem entirely unconcerned at their fate, and defy the honest part of the community. The whole thing is sickening. *Let us thank God that it could never happen under our institutions.*"

Blush, New Yorkers, blush! The redder, the better! Here is fair encouragement for Republican principles abroad.

Reflect—if this continues—how will American securities sell in the markets of the world? Where will our credit be, in the next decade? And our honor—pshaw! Swept to the winds!

"Will your public grievances redress themselves? Will corruption and venality die away of course, or will they rather spread wider and wider, and take still deeper root, till at last it will become impossible to eradicate them?"—*Burgh.**

* Political Disquisitions, A. D. 1775, vol. 3, page 269.

REFORM.

Perhaps no word in the language is more often upon the lips of New Yorkers, to-day, but who can tell us what it means? Who has studied its derivation?

Quietly ask any friend you meet along the street, Reader. You will utterly confound him. "A conundrum," he will say, "I give it up."

Any man who smiles is frankly forgiven; but let him smile who will. Such is the melancholy fact. But if difficult to find a man who can give the meaning of "Reform," how much more puzzling still, to point out the pathway to it. Huge public meetings have gathered and perspired about it. Journals have fretted and fumed over it. Grave Committees have wrinkled seventy foreheads at it; and Philosophers have *thought much*, and said nothing. Divines have preached. Lawyers have turned over dusty volumes. Merchants have growled and Citizens have groaned. Here is a mighty fuss, and for all the world [with profound reverence be it said], it reminds one of some old buffer with a terrible gout in his great toe. He growls at every thing, and everybody, save only the agreeable *causes*, which produced the gout. He never abuses these.

For the time being palliatives are applied—he feels easier, and calls it "Reform;" but the causes go on, and he carries his gout to the grave.

This is New York, of to-day, to the letter. Here are the scattered rays of light, focused on the point of a pin.

Gentle Reader, come with me—let us bend our puzzled heads calmly over the pages of our old school-friends, Worcester and Webster.

DERIVATION OF REFORM.

Worcester says: Reform is derived from the Latin *re*, again, and *formo*, to form. It signifies, to amend—to restore—"*to change, or return to a former good state.*"

Webster says: Reform—"to form again—to create or shape anew—to change from worse to better, as *to reform a profligate man.*"

It is therefore clear, than when we turn present bad rulers out of office, and call it "reform," we fairly cheat and befog ourselves. That is "*relief*," not "*reform.*" Misuse of words creates confusion, and makes the Public miss its aim. Call things by right names, and a man can understand. But what is the use of cheating ourselves?

Reformers beat air, unless the term *reform* shall be clearly comprehended by the public mind. When we look upon *reform* for what it is: "*a return to a former good state*," it seems to bring the crime of public disorder home to every individual, where it belongs. When *reform* is thought to mean nothing but *relief*, then it lays the public crime only at the consciences of corrupt rulers, where it does not belong. A man might just as consistently lay his watch outside the front door, and take no blame to himself that it presently disappeared.

Government is only a precautionary measure, after all. It would never be needed, if all men were good. Therefore, corrupt rulers, under purely elective governments, like ours, are merely the effect of a cause, not the cause itself. They are a sort of eruption on the outside, showing disease within. Let us proceed frankly to investi-

gate the causes of corruption, that we may know how to cure the disease itself.

Popular clamor ascribes corruption to various causes. Logic suggests, consider these first—for light is produced by the absence of darkness. Confessed ignorance is the primary step to actual knowledge. He who confesses himself mistaken, fast approaches the truth.

Among the popular causes assigned is

THE FOREIGN ELEMENT.

Much has been said about the city being governed by the "Foreign Element." If this be true, no reason appears for it, save the decline of American patriotism and American spirit. The general opinion seems to be that the foreign element is numerically stronger. But this is not the truth. The foreign population is 25 per cent. in the minority. Turn to the "Report of the Ninth Census of the United States," page 366:—

Population of New York City, *Native born*, 523,198
" " " " " *Foreign born*, 419,094

Of the foreign-born citizens, 202,000 are *Irish*, and 151,000 are *Germans*.

Those who fear damage from the influx of foreign emigrants, allege that the industrious go West—the lazy and vagabond stay here. This is only partly true. But suppose they do? In a few years, their deaths will relieve us, if nothing else.

"Experience has taught us, Conscript Fathers, that the wisest laws and the best examples of virtue owe their origin to the actual

commission of crimes and misdemeanors."—*Speech of P. Thrasea.**

It is a curious fact that the two most remarkable nations of history arose from an ignoble beginning. *Rome*, under Romulus, with a congregation of outlaws, slaves, vagabonds and thieves—*England*, by the conquest of a French bastard, at the head of an armed banditti. Yet, by good government, and public virtue, these nations rose to the front ranks of honor and distinction.

"So that, as loose administration corrupts any society of men, a wise, steady and strict government will, in time, reform a country, let its manners have been ever so depraved." †

The "Foreign Element!" the "Foreign Element!" Here is the great bug-bear of the modern growler. But what should we do without it? Let facts be submitted for candid inspection:—

First: It forms four-ninths of our population. Without it, therefore, our city would be reduced to nearly half its size.

Second: It is of the very bone and sinew of the city.

Third: As a body, it is energetic, patriotic, law-abiding, liberty-loving.

Fourth: It does the bulk of the city's manual labor.

Fifth: [Most wonderful of all] it exemplifies the highest order of the city's genius.

Here are the proofs, Reader:—

Our Leading Lawyer, ... An Irishman.

* The Annals of Tacitus, page 279.

† Burgh's Political Disquisitions.

Our Leading Merchant,	. . .	An Irishman.
" " Divine,	. . . .	A Scotchman.
" " Painter,	. . .	A German.
" Most successful Journalist,	. .	A Scotchman.

A proud endorsement, this, on native talent in the Metropolis of America! How much further the humiliating analysis might be carried, let any New Yorker investigate who pleases. The writer, for his part, has had enough of it. But should an open view of these facts tend to arouse American youth from the mental inactivity into which it seems to have sunk, since Washington, Franklin, Adams, Jefferson, Clay and Webster, may Heaven be praised.*

Again, the question arises: how long would it take for the American race to run out altogether, but for the influx of hardy foreigners, and intermarriage with lusty and prolific races? Examine any native family, where marriages, for four generations back, have been purely American. The figures are generally startling. The writer's family is a case in point. His grandmother gloried in eleven children; his mother seven, his sister only two. Nay, numerous as the family is, there is not a son or daughter, of the present generation, having over two children.

Let Americans, generally, consult the family records; and refrain from denunciation of the Foreign Element. Truth is not always pleasant, but it may be profitable to men of sense; and it *will* prevail.

"He that rebuketh a man, afterwards shall

* American talent is not dead. Such an idea is preposterous. It only slumbers. Arouse it—cultivate it: it will take first rank, and astonish the world.

find more favor than he that flattereth with the tongue."—*King Solomon.**

No man doubts but that, amongst the foreign element, there are many scamps and rascals, much of ignorance and crime. But the vast majority is all the other way. And the true Reformer will find it so. Therefore, Reader, here is not the cause of public corruption.

"Every act of authority of one man" [or body of men], "over another, for which there is not an absolute necessity, is tyrannical."†

Another cause of public corruption is declared to be

UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE.

Thus, great hue and cry is raised against that principle. One constantly hears good men, thinking men, men of sense, making such remarks as these: "Oh! this system of government is a failure"—"Universal suffrage is a farce"—"We shall soon be compelled to return to kingly government."

"Kingly government," indeed! One would think the world's history lost, or passed forever from the memories of men. One would believe, to hear men talk, that the record of kingly government pictured a golden age—an era of peace and purity, of honesty and joy; that the lives of people, under that form, were a smooth and even tenor of unmixed felicity. Consult the record, Reader, of any monarchical government, since history was written, to find such illusions dissolve like dreams.

* Proverbs, chap. 28, verse 23.

† Beccaria, Crimes and Punishments, page 10.

Not three centuries ago, our forefathers fled from monarchy, three thousand miles across the seas. Not one century since, the monster, stretching its iron arm over the ocean, sought again to enslave them, but was beaten back by the nation's might.

The argument against democratic government first supposes the people corrupt—plunderers of their own property—and then creates an ideal good man as King, selected from this corrupt whole, who is never to steal other people's property. A manifest absurdity.

Imagine this country ruled by a Dionysius of Syracuse, an Alexander of Macedon, or a Caligula of Rome. Imagine the history of the Jewish monarchies repeated here. Imagine Egyptian, Persian, Spanish, French, English or German monarchical records written in the future of America. Our children's children would thank us for the bloody heritage, methinks.

Be assured, Reader, universal suffrage is not the cause of public corruption. On the contrary, 'tis the chiefest enemy corruption has. This rests upon the ground that self-preservation is the first law of nature.

Another pronounced cause of corruption is that the

WHOLE COMMUNITY IS CORRUPT.

It is said that corruption permeates the entire body corporate—nay, that it runs through our system—political, social—like the veins of a leaf, reaching from centre to outer edge.

The popular declaration is: "Every man has his price"—"*Commission*" is the public by-word. But these expressions are not true in fact. Everybody knows

them false. Mankind [taking cue from Mr. Darwin] is a sort of high order of monkey. It chats and re-chats the sounds it hears.* Not one man in a hundred carefully restrains his life from uttering popular errors. Thus, by constant repetition, they are quickly swallowed whole [by general acquiescence], and come to be considered facts.

What stuff and nonsense to pronounce the whole community corrupt. This, of all the reasons given, is the weakest and silliest yet.

Is it not prudent to consider the danger to the public good, arising out of this vile habit of wholesale denunciation? It makes the sound of fraud familiar, and renders men so distrustful of one another that it is wholly impracticable to fuse and organize the better elements of society. Even the "Committee of Seventy" was maligned by honest and reasonable men. The writer speaks from knowledge of facts, for he was daily called on to stand defender to the virtue of that honorable committee; and this because it is the fashion to malign everybody. Rogues like nothing better than to render honest men suspicious of one another; then they stand an even chance to be trusted themselves.

Does any man of common sense suppose that the honest elements can ever be united, while every man in the community habitually looks on every other man as a thief? and yet such is substantially the case. An all-pervading *Suspicion*, rooted on the public mind, is gnawing at the roots of Society.

It is hoped that sensible men will have done with this weak and suicidal fashion.

It is as easy to get out of it, as it was to get into it.

* The writer often finds himself tripping in this respect.

"Be the situation of any private person prosperous and fine as his heart can wish—if his country be ruined, he himself must necessarily be involved in that ruin. But he that is unfortunate, in a flourishing community, may soon catch hold of expedients of redress."—*Oration of Pericles.**

The three principal causes generally assigned for the advent of the monster *Corruption*, have thus been duly considered. The judgment of the Reader is left to declare what force they have.

One other cause assigned is the corruptionist himself. It is declared, but for him, all would be well. In simple terms, the owner opens his treasures to the robber, and then declares: "I didn't do it." How could the corruptionist be elected, without the people's consent—open, on the part of those who worked and voted for him; tacit, on the part of those who worked and voted, *not at all?*

The people may, if they please, follow a golden two-fold rule: to work and vote always for men known to be good, and against men known to be bad.

But if, perchance, a sheep in wolf's clothing occasionally gets into power, by cheating the people, they may, under our wise constitutions, adopt the ingenious rule of the merchant: "When a man cheats me the first time, that's his fault—when the second time, that's my fault."

"A State must be weak, or its government

* Thucydides, Book 2.

incapable, when one desperado is too mighty for the laws."—*Burgh.**

We now come to a serious consideration of the real cause itself, and that is the

CRIME OF NEGLECT.

"*Rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee.*"†

Here is a negative crime, instead of a positive, but is it less a crime for that? Divine laws punish it, if human laws do not.

Business-men of New York—come hither with your metaphysical blades—split hairs with us on the following propositions: How much juster a man is he who commits the crime of "*neglect*," leading to fatal results, on the one hand—than he who commits the crime of "*assault*," leading to fatal results on the other? What stays the hand of the neglecter? What impels the hand of the assaulter? Answer—Imagined self-interest, or passion.

"Those statesmen are inexcusable, in whose time any good custom is suffered to go into disuetude, or any salutary law to lose its efficiency."—*Burgh.*‡

But what shall be thought of a people who, in their day, suffer the groundwork of their liberty—*the ballot*—to go into desuetude?

* Political Disquisitions, vol. 3, page 18.
† Proverbs, chap. 9, verse 8.
‡ Political Disquisitions, vol. 3, page 210.

Ye white-haired business-men of New York—ye who built this City of Merchants—ye who have listened to just applause; We, your sons, charge upon you the crime of neglect. We impeach you at the bar of Nature, as the first and chiefest cause of the public calamities. The crime is with you. Every gray-headed man of you—look back over the years gone-by—recall your fitful non-performance of public duty, and stand condemned! Each one of you, is of the grand sum-total—the cause of corruption to-day. Thirty years ago you were in large political majority on the records. Even to-day, your numerical power is in the majority—your moral power simply grand. *But you will not exert it!*

"Virtue, supported with abilities, will always be too hard for vice and stupidity. And men of parts acting upon principle, will keep together, while weak and worthless men will quarrel and divide."—*Burgh.**

You stand convicted by your own confessions. Several elderly merchants have said to the writer that, during their lives they have often engaged in dialogues like the following: "Good-morning, Mr. B. Are you going to vote to-day?" *Mr. B.*—"No; I can't spend the time." *Mr. A*—"How can good citizens expect to keep good men in office, unless they attend to political duties?" *Mr. B.*—"How can a man expect his business to thrive, who attends to politics?" *Mr. A.*—"But, friend B., if you don't pay some attention to political duties, you will find, by and by, that your taxes will increase." *Mr. B.*—"Well, suppose they do; I can better afford to pay more

* Political Disquisitions, vol. 3, page 229.

tax than to neglect my business for politics. Good-morning, Mr. A." (Here is sophistry, with a witness).

Another proof:

Consult the Red-Book of 1868, pages 91 and 283.

Population of New York City, census of 1865, 726,386
Vote " " " " " " " 128,975

Of which vote:—

51,500 were Native born.
77,475 were Foreign born.

Thus, with a native population much larger than the foreign [as shown in a former page], the foreign vote is half as much again as the native.* Instances have been related to the writer of American families of six voters [a father and five sons] who never even thought of going to the polls.

Is it a marvel, then, that the political phenomenon of a *majority* of native Americans, governed by a *minority* of foreign emigrants, is presented to the gaze of a wondering world, on the spot called Manhattan Island? Can history produce the like? And this is proud New York! This the wondrous city of the western world, of which Americans boast!

Hang your heads, New Yorkers, and blush with conscious shame, for ye have need to blush!

"Employing in stations of power and trust men of notorious bad characters, is disgracing the age in which it was done, for it supposes a

* The Foreign Vote appears to be one in five to the population, or about right; the Native Vote less than one in nine to the population, or disgracefully wrong.

want of better men, and endangers the State. —*Burgh.**

During the past quarter century, or more, the Business-men of New York, engrossed in money-making, have collectively and systematically kicked across the thresholds of their doors, as of no account, the most precious privileges of the ballot—privileges for which their fathers gave life and property. Nay, within sight of our doors—yonder on the neighboring hillsides of Westchester—our forefathers left their bloody tracks in the snows, fighting for these privileges of the ballot: *election of representatives—taxation—and a voice in the expenditure of the public money.* And we, their degenerate sons, are found surrendering these privileges, with perfect indifference, to a minority of foreigners. Was ever the like? Pause here, Reader, sadly to drop a tear on the grave of *departed Patriotism.*

"There is no surer mark that a government is near its utter destruction, than when the people are observed to be careless and unconcerned at a time when they are pressed and encompassed with dangers of the highest nature. This state lethargy is such an apopleptic symptom, as is commonly the forerunner of death to the body-politic."—*Dr. Chas. Davenant.*†

Of course the poor emigrants, coming to our shores from foreign lands, finding these rich legacies cast into

* Political Disquisitions, vol. 3, page 57.

† "An Essay upon the Balance of Power"—Works of, in 5 vols., vol. 3, page 299.

the streets as trash [like the broken toys of a spoiled child], have taken them up and carried them away. Of course they have. Who could expect otherwise? And *we* charge *them* with the crime of theft. We, who tossed these privileges away! We, who loll in comfortable parlors, when business is over, and never do a stroke of public duty—we expect to gather in the fruits of others' labor.

It cannot be done! God's law of nature is against it! Can the farmer look for a harvest of wheat, where he never planted a single seed? Can lazy good men look for public virtues and benefits, where they never do a stroke of public duty? Do men of sense expect that the public mill can run without the motive-power of personal interest? And when that power is all supplied by other men, do they who sit idly by, expect the privilege of gathering in the proceeds? Has the penalty of Eden: "By the sweat of thy brow," been suspended for Americans only?

"The inertia and timidity of the people are the great difficulties in the way of every reformation."—*Burgh.**

Reader, do you want further proof? Step into the store or warehouse of any merchant here—endeavor to get his ear or attention to any matter unconnected with his business. What will be the result? "Oh! I'm too busy to-day, Sir; I cannot undertake outside matters, to the detriment of my business." Presently, corruption seizes on his treasure, and he starts up aghast!

* Political Disquisitions—vol. 3, page 378.

"Nothing is troublesome that we do willingly."—*Jefferson.**

The citizen, of fifty years ago, considered it a first duty to vote. Nay, it was a dear-bought privilege—one to surrender but with "life, fortune, and sacred honor."

The native New Yorker of to-day, grown indolent, careless, and indifferent, can hardly be dragged to a local election. The contrast is sad, indeed, and smells rank to Heaven of impending dissolution.

Alas! to what a humiliating point has the political indolence of our fathers brought us. 'Tis nature's law that he can never be truly great, who prefers present ease and indulgence to future honor and glory.

Honest government and public confidence are the only thongs which bind the differing elements of society together. Cut these, and the City will drop asunder like the peoples at Babel. Dishonest government has lost more good residents to the City, in the last ten years, than all other causes put together, death not excepted. 'Tis a well-known fact!

"It is one of the least menacing symptoms of an age prone to degeneracy, that the minds of men become perplexed in the discernment of merit, as much as the spirit becomes enfeebled in conduct, and the heart misled in the choice of its objects. The care of mere fortune is supposed to constitute wisdom, retirement from public affairs, and real indifference

* Randall's Life of—vol. 3, page 525.

to mankind receive the applause of moderation and virtue."—*Prof. Ferguson of Edinburgh.**

GRATIFYING NEWS FROM THE DIRECTORY.

The earnest Reformer may not unlikely find interesting information in the City Directory.

For instance, the writer desired to ascertain the number of Business-men in the City. Under this head are included wholesale and retail merchants—manufacturers—professional-men, etc., etc. [In fact, we are nearly all business-men]. He opened this year's directory in four places, as follows:

On page	469	he counted	73	names.
" "	861	" "	53	"
" "	956	" "	44	"
" "	1094	" "	60	"
		Total,	230	"
Take the average one-fourth—			57	"

No. of pages in the Directory, 1308
Multiply by the above average of 57
Gives a total of . . . . . 74,556 names.

Place the City's vote at 130,000, and a clear majority is thus shown, in favor of the Business-men alone. It is not claimed that these figures are more than approximately correct. They are only given with a view to make a forcible exhibit. But they do not include what may be termed the laboring class. And how many hon-

* History Civil Society, page 392.

est mechanics, porters, and laborers can each reader of this pamphlet name: men who will go in a body for reform?

The influence of Business-men amongst the laboring classes is immense, and when Reform is properly understood and organized, it will be rightly used.

"The manners of the upper ranks descend to the lowest.—When M. Antonius was accused, his servant bore the torture with heroic fortitude." *

FIGURES IN COMPARISON.

A glance at facts will quickly convince New Yorkers of the city's numerical power:

First: It contains nearly three times the population which the whole State contained, at the first census in 1790.

Second: There are to-day, *twenty-one States*, in the Union, each having a population smaller than *New York City*. Here they are: *Arkansas*, *California*, *Connecticut*, *Delaware*, *Florida*, *Kansas*, *Louisiana*, *Maine*, *Maryland*, *Minnesota*, *Mississippi*, *Nebraska*, *Nevada*, *New Hampshire*, *New Jersey*, *Oregon*, *Rhode Island*, *South Carolina*, *Texas*, *Vermont*, and *West Virginia*.

For the proof of this, the reader is referred to the "Ninth Census Report of the United States," page 3. The facts are suggestive!

Third: We have six States, in the Union, whose popu-

* Ancient Universal History, vol. 12, page 453.

lations, combined, are not so great as New York City's *alone*. Here they are: *New Hampshire*, *Rhode Island*, *Delaware*, *Nebraska*, *Nevada*, and *Oregon*. These six States, together, glory in twelve distinguished *Senators* in the controlling branch of the National Government; while New York City, with a larger population, only claims the smaller part of a single Senator. Here is minority government with a vengeance. And it seems a pretty large share of the aristocratic element, in our form of government. Still, it is well enough, perhaps, and nobody complains.

But let us examine the lower house of Congress. It is claimed this wide difference is offset there. What are the facts? Take the same six States named above. With a combined population of 917,075 they possess *nine* Representatives, while New York City, with a larger population, [942,292] possesses only *six*. See Red-Book of New York, 1871, page 219. Here is food for thought, New Yorkers. Perchance Reform may find good work to do *even at Washington*.

"A man who has power, is but too seldom at the pains to use argument.—*Lord Barthurst.**

A CHOICE OF DESTINIES.

Reflecting men should take this proposition to heart: New York City has a choice of three destinies.

First: An honest, efficient government.

Second: A government wholly dishonest and corrupt.

* Debates of Lords, vol. 5, page 152.

Third: One, like the present, made up of half and half.

The first requires a genuine, emphatic public effort on the part of New York Business-men collectively. The second requires their utter neglect and indifference. The third, what they are now doing, neither one thing nor the other. The choice must and will be made, and it is but a step in either direction—with honor on one side —ruin on the other.

Public duties are like other duties—the effect will prove the cause. When well-performed, the result is good; when half-performed, the result is indifferent; when badly performed, the result is evil.

The logic of the whole affair is this: that, as the mercantile energy of the business-man built this City's material prosperity, so his public indolence will ruin it politically. Political and Business interests must go hand in hand. They will perish asunder, like the head and body cut in two. What is the use of acquiring property, and then electing bad rulers to steal it? And yet we do precisely this, when, by devoting all our time to business-matters, none is left for public duties. For our absence from local primary and poll elections, leaves the whole machinery of government in the hands of irresponsible men. Into this slough of public indifference have the merchants of New York been sinking, deeper and deeper for thirty years. And we, their sons, see the sad results.

As a corrupt source will blacken any river to its mouth, so a pure and crystal source will wash that river clean, in time. In like manner, an incorrupt majority will wash any government clean, as we shall see with ours.

"Whatever is amiss in the manners of the people, either proceeds from bad example of the great, or may be cured by the good."*

ONE STEP TO TYRANNY.

If the great central mass of our citizens, wholly engrossed with private affairs, are quiescent in public matters, how easy for any shrewd diplomatist, rising in our midst, to organize a system by which the municipal government could be shaped into almost any form desired.

Those who doubt it had better study the inner workings of Athenian, Sicilian and Roman democracies. Let the wise-heads talk about the checks and counter-checks of our republican systems as much as they please. It is true our forefathers did wonders in erecting the Constitutions. But experience has taught how difficult it is to form a constitution, or a law, through which [to use the common phrase] a horse and cart may not be driven. Besides, our patriotic grandsires cannot rise out of antique graves to perform the public duties of indolent, unappreciative children.

Good government, after all, lies in *execution*, rather than in *written law*. Otherwise the admirable "Laws of God" would have produced an eternal Paradise on Earth. Want of execution is the municipal crime. Our native citizens must arouse from their fatal sleep of indifference—else Reform will always die in the womb; and good government itself will soon be doomed to eternal slumber in the unrelenting grave. A public

* Maxim of Edward, King of Portugal

heritage, the same as a private, may soon dissolve, for want of care and attention.

The fear of *Tyranny*, for Americans, is laughed at in these times. But laughter should turn to tears now; for if, under our systems, the public money be stolen, *with impunity*, why not the public liberties too? If the inertia of the people permits the one, 'twill not be long before it will allow the other. If the people put rogues again and again, into high places, so they will tyrants also. Where a nation makes money its god, it worships none other, neither the "Lord of Hosts," nor the "god of liberty."

"Power, like water, is ever working its way, and wherever it can find or make an opening, is altogether as prone to overflow whatever is subject to it."—*Benj. Franklin.**

ABOLISH PARTY IN THE CITY.

Reform, to be effective, must fight its battles under non-partisan banners. The writer of this pamphlet is a Democrat—his best friend a staunch Republican. Do not drive us apart, Reformer! We should battle side by side, in the ranks of Reform; and we are but a common example of native New York. Take your inspiration from last November. What event more thrilling to the patriots' heart than the spectacle presented to his gaze in the Fall of 1871? The youth of the city, then, rich and poor alike, were banded together under the name of "Young Men's Municipal Reform Association."

* Works of, in 10 vols., by Jared Sparks, vol. 3, page 429.

Youth of all parties, and all positions, fighting shoulder to shoulder against corruption, bore the brunt of the battle, and a signal victory was won. Truly the spirit of '76 was breathed upon the city then, and Heaven smiled at the spectacle. Let it be repeated in November of seventy-two.

There should be no division of the people into parties here, save into "Honest" and "Dishonest." Then might the people range themselves accordingly.

"It is an old and vulgar error, that opposition and party are necessary in a free State. * * * * Nobody ever thought an opposition necessary in a private family, where the heads have nothing but the good of the family in view. * * * Take away the jewel of parties, the emolumentary invitations to the fatal and mischievous strife, in which every victory is a loss to the country."—*Burgh.**

It needs but a native, fair, honest, efficient government to make this City of the western world the brightest jewel in the diadem of nations. If we have no sufficient native talent to rule us, let us make rulers from good men amongst our foreign-born citizens. There are certainly many such. But that any necessity exists for the election of foreign-born scamps and rascals is preposterous. *Reason* and *figures* are dead against it.

"It would be ridiculous to throw away reason upon those banditti [those public enemies

* Political Disquisitions, vol. 3, page 331.

to human society] who go into Parliament with the execrable intention of carrying to market a country which trusted them with its all."—*F. Gordon.**

Organized action in Reform has hitherto been deferred till the eve of an election—time is then short, and seems to be wasted in preparation.

TRUE POWER.

It is not so much in numbers, as in *unity*, that true power lies. History teems with events to prove this position. 'Tis the same in politics as in war. But what proofs do New Yorkers require, outside the immediate history of their own times? *Unity of the few, inaction of the many*—this has ruled New York!

"When we peruse attentively the history of despotism, we sometimes behold with astonishment a handful of men keeping a whole nation in awe. * * * For what is the voice of the people, if every one is to continue silent.—*Burgh.*†

Let us imagine a thousand honest young patriots in New York City, properly organized into a permanent society, with its branches in the wards. Give them five years, and where then would be the power to resist their moral weight? In that short space of time, would be

* Cato's Letters, vol. 3, page 286.

† Political Disquisitions, vol. 3, page 379.

found amongst them *Writers, Thinkers, Speakers, Workers.* Such an organization, magnet-like, would attract all the merit of the City. Pshaw! what is the use of argument here? Conviction needs no argument!

But those who expect to behold matured "Reform" springing up in a season, would plant an acorn to-day, and look for an oak to-morrow. In other words, they expect impossibilities.

Again, the Reformer must never forget he is an Amputator. He must constantly listen for groans and abuse. Let him bring to mind, continually, the intrepid words of our grand old patriot, John Adams. Here they are:—

"Upon common theatres, indeed, the applause of the audience is of more importance to the actors than their own approbation. But upon the stage of life, while Conscience claps, let the world hiss."—*John Adams.**

In a democracy, one of the surest bulwarks of public safety is a thorough training of the native youth in history, composition and oratory.† History is said to be philosophy teaching by example. Composition and Oratory are the arts of informing and persuading men. History teaches what *has* occurred. Writing and Speaking herald this information to the masses. When the native youth are proficient in these, they naturally seek exercise in public affairs. But when simply trained to *money-*

* Works of, in 10 vols., by Ch. Fr. Adams, vol. 1, page 30.

† Those who doubt this truth, may settle their minds by a careful perusal of Spartan ethics and policy, in the pages of that inimitable work: History of Greece, by Geo. Grote, 10 vols.

getting (and nothing else), as seems to be the case in our community, can we expect other results than those we sadly see, and bitterly feel?

"Exorbitant riches in the hands of individuals, while the public treasures are exhausted, like swelled legs with an emaciated body, are the symptoms of decline in a State." *Burgh.**

Let the citizens decide whether New York, with its debt doubled in half a decade, savors of "treasures exhausted."

CAUSE OF FAILURE.

Reformers have hitherto failed of sweeping results, because their labors have been on the outer circle, instead of the inner. Palliatives are applied outside, instead of purgatives inside. This will never do. First find out the disease, then strike at its root. Work from the inside, out. Plans of reform should be Centrifugal, not Centripetal. Let common sense support this principle.

The argument runs thus: Disease cannot be cured, save by removing the cause. When the cause departs, the effect follows after. *This is cure.* This *is Reform.*

Thus, with public corruption, remove the cause and the effect will cease. There is no other mode of cure. Everything else is bare *relief.*

If the people of New York decline the effort re-

* Political Disquisitions, vol. 3, page 187.

quired, "Corruption" will stalk on in seven-league boots, till the city is financially, morally ruined.

Facts are stubborn things, Citizens. You must accept the truth. Keep on trying your palliatives, if you will, but you might as well hold up a saucer to stay the winds.

"Habitual sloth and indulgence, the same in public matters as in private life, is not immediately felt on every occasion of neglect, but shows itself in the general result."—*Demosthenes.**

EMOLUMENTS OF OFFICE.

"The whole world is not enough for one fantastic voluptuary; while a very little supplies nature."

The outrageous bulks to which commissions and emoluments of office have swollen in certain municipal places, calls loudly for reform—if for no other reason, still because money is thus put into the hands of office-holders, in abundance, with which to buy themselves again and again into power. Thus do the people [generous souls] supply money for the purpose of oppressing themselves.

Serving one's Country has been compared to serving God. It is simply what every man ought to do—those who are rich, without compensation; those who are poor, for as little as may be.

When a man has served his Country all in his power,

* Fourth Philippic.

he has still only performed his duty. Public officers should receive recompense as clergymen do, because they have no means to live without. We wonder how Heaven regards rich ministers and rich statesmen, working for salaries. As if a man must be paid in yellow dross for doing his duty to his God and his Country.

General Washington declined any pay in his day. Oh that we had such patriots now!

"To a luxurious man, the more you give the more methods of expense he will always invent; and money to an avaricious man is like water to a dropsical; the more you give, the more he will desire."—*Robert Vyner.**

One of the strongest arguments against large compensation to public servants, is found in the strict honesty of Army and Navy Officers, as a Class. Corruption, amongst these gentlemen, may be pronounced almost unheard of. They regard it with horror and disgust. To buy a Regular Officer with money, would as soon be thought of as to corrupt a Clergyman. The writer speaks from knowledge of facts, having in the army, at least, some of his most intimate and warmest friendships. In the Army and Navy pay is so small as utterly to preclude the forming of extravagant and luxurious habits. This is considered most salutary in its effects on the morals of officers.

Would to Heaven such praise could justly be bestowed upon our Civil Officers. Were they paid in like proportion, would not results be better? Let the experiment be tried in New York City. Large compen-

* Speech 1774—Alm. Debates Commons, Vol. 1, Page 313.

sation is a wretched failure here, everybody knows. Test its opposite.

"One public post, and a man's private concerns are business enough for any one man."*

WHERE ARE THE BENEFITS?

The Business man is challenged to exhibit a single lasting benefit derived from neglect of public duty. If neither profit, honor or duty are in it, why do it? The experiment is tried, the penalties are felt and seen. But where are the benefits?

Like the parent and his offspring, children grow to ignore the father who neglected them. Reciprocity is public as well as private.

Where, then, are the arguments favoring neglect of public duty—where the faintest excuse? Come forth, Logicians, and testify. Stand ye on the lofty Kunchinginga—sweep the horizon with your logical telescopes—turn ye from the rising to the setting sun, you cannot discover the bigness of a pin's-head, in the logical circle, to excuse or support this negative crime. *Duty* and *Interest*, *Logic* and *Figures* are dead against it.

The whole proposition is built on sand, with a base of bubbles, walls of tissue, and a dome of mist. One logical puff, and away it goes!

"Have you not observed, said Socrates, that all men willingly submit to those whom they believe the most skilful; in sickness, to the best

* King John 3d, of Portugal.

physician; in a storm, to the best pilot; and in agriculture, to him whom they consider as the best husbandman."*

INTERMINGLING OF CLASSES POLITICALLY.

If it be possible to arouse the wealthier classes, collectively, out of a chronic lethargy regarding public duty—if that element of society shall haply be prevailed on [in its rising generation] to undertake active part in the *work* of politics, a potent result will be witnessed in the heightened tone of society generally. The richer and better-educated youth will come in contact with the poorer classes on something like a footing of equality. This will tend, directly, to strike down the fatal wall of division between classes—that most destructive engine of the public harmony.

The ornate qualities of the one class will commingle with the practical qualities of the other—checking, on the one side—elevating, on the other. Thus the classes will learn to know and appreciate one another better. The final result will embody that complete and symmetrical *Society*, designed by our forefathers, and hailed by humanitarians in every age.

How many earnest lovers of free-government, abroad, are looking with anxious and hopeful hearts to the "Reform movement" in New York City. Taunted with our failures, and struck dumb with sorrow at the present aspect, they are hanging their heads in silence to-day.

France, generous France, our firmest friend in '76,

* Xenophon's Memorabilia.

she too is looking to *us* for argument and practice. Her guiding star, in this day of public trial, is across the Atlantic, here!

"Those commonwealths have been most durable which have oftenest reformed, and recomposed themselves accordingly to their first institution, for by these means they repair the breaches, and counter-work the natural effect of time."—*Pym's Speech in Parliament* 1628.*

FAILURE TO AROUSE THE BUSINESS-MEN.

Some say: "the argument is admitted—the fault does lie with the Business-men; but the difficulty is to arouse them. This cannot be done. The trial has oft been made, with continued failure."

The answer to all this is—that Reform will get no active aid from the Fathers and Grandfathers. Long-standing habit takes too firm hold on men to admit of any hope in the Elders of New York, in this regard. The ruts in which they run are frozen stiff and deep. You will never get them out of comfortable parlors, and lazy habits, to do the *work* of Patriots. They may aid and encourage, but they will hardly work. The working patriots of the Revolution were young men—so must the working patriots of Reform be.

Start any system of Reform, without recognizing this plain fact, and failure will be the inevitable result. But the the growing sons of New York, warned in time of their fathers' errors, *will they do the work?*

* Parliamentary History. Vol. 8—Page 173.

Our gray-headed fathers will soon pass away—to a broader scene than this *little spot!* A few more fleeting years, and they are gone forever! Their days are numbered *even now!* Their chairs will soon be vacant by the fireside. Tears will be dropped upon their lifeless clay—mementos cherished in homes left vacant. The hand of love will raise monuments, and inscribe their merits on enduring stone. Green grass and flowers will smile, in the sunlight, over their graves. But we shall mourn their loss forever!

And then! young men of New York, this great municipal heritage will pass to you in full. Are you prepared for the responsibility? You cannot escape the question. Answer ye who know!

"No great thing was ever done, but by such as have preferred the love of their country, to all other considerations."—*Dr. D'Avenant.*

TO THE LADIES OF NEW YORK.

The question of Reform is not to be narrowed within the little limits of the Political arena. It is broader, grander, loftier than that. The groundwork of Society—the public morals—are in danger. And this spreads abroad the question to *Morality* itself. It implores the aid of Churchmen and Philosophers—Humanitarians and Statesmen. Nay! it invokes the virtuous endeavors of the *Mothers* and *Daughters*—those architects of a nation's heroes. It calls for that gentle influence, with-

Political and Commercial Works of Dr. Charles D'Avenant—5 vols.

out whose countenance, Sin could never show its face abroad—or Corruption find a spot to plant its cloven foot. Satan plied this power in Paradise, and a World was humbled into dust.

Oh! Mothers and Daughters of New York—what a work is yours to do! Know ye not your power? Your simple word should make a cause triumphant. You may constitute Reform the fashion. You may render it *infamy*—as it surely is—for husbands, brothers, lovers to sit idly by your side, while Virtue and Liberty are dying for want of support.

In spite of all that jealousy utters against the New York ladies—in spite of the charge: "that they are absorbed in dress and fashion," the world is challenged to produce more capable women. Their adaptability is wonderful, from the heiress to the shop-girl. And Reform can ask no higher boon from Heaven, than to render the ladies *enthusiastic* in its cause. For they will rouse lazy mankind to the quick, and victory will come in half the time.

The ladies do not realize their public responsibility. For no political maxim rests on sounder principles than this: that the foremost sign of impending ruin to a State, may be seen in the wanton extravagance and manners of its matrons and maidens.

"To love something more than one's self—that is the secret of all that is great; to know how to live for others—that is the aim of all noble souls." *

* "An Attic Philosopher in Paris." From the French of Emile Souvestre, Page 116.

A TWO-FOLD DISEASE.

The disease in New York is two-fold: *Extravagance* and *Neglect of Public Duty.* Or, want of frugality *in the masses,* on one side,—non-attendance to the ballot *by business-men,* on the other. Let us suppose these corrected—*reformed.* What should we see?

First: the poorer classes, by saving part of their wages [like our German friends] would gradually become property-holders, i. e., citizens with solid local interests.

Second: our business-men, having local property interests already, and being in the majority now, would, by attending to public duties, place good men in office, instead of bad In ten years the change in New York would be miraculous. Class distinctions would melt away. Peace, Order, and Prosperity would reign. Heaven would smile its glad assent. Friends of democratic government would raise their drooping faces the world over. New York would be the pride and example of the whole country—as it ought to be—as Sparta, Athens, and Rome were, in their day. Reader, is this Utopian? Not a bit of it.

Kind Heaven grant it! and let the men of this generation be laid to rest in the midst of God's perfect work on Earth! Oh New Yorker! What a destiny is thine if you will but work it out. Pshaw! money is dust beside it.

To the citizen who finds no joy in serving either his God or his Country *gratis,* what a scene of ashes life must be? Let us regard it: FIRST: *a rattle!* SECOND: *a rocking-horse!* THIRD: *a puff of romance!* FOURTH: *money!* FIFTH: *more money!* SIXTH: *the grave!*

"What avarice, in an old man, can propose to itself I cannot conceive, for can any thing be more absurd than, in proportion as less of our journey remains, to seek a greater supply of provisions." *

USES OF HISTORY—SACRED AND PROFANE.

What is History, but the essence of life, extracted to order, and preserved in libraries? The entire ground is here surveyed, and laid out by systematic rule. 'Tis the truthful record of the *acts* of men.

Here are your arithmetical and geometrical problems of human existence [worked out to perfect solution] from the cradle to the grave. He who would learn to act wisely and well, let him read history. Why spend life in solving problems, already solved to perfection there? Search the universal record, Reader

"For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened."—*Sermon on the Mount.*†

It is something wonderful to witness the general detestation, hate, and ignominy heaped upon traitors and detected plunderers of public money, throughout the record of history. The student is amazed to find how men can copy examples leading direct to ruin. Is it that such copyists never read history? or that they are

* Cicero on Old Age.

† Matthew—Chap. 7, Verse 8.

incapable of understanding its lessons? or, do they, like the murderer [forgetting that "murder will out"] vainly hope to escape detection? Or, alas! what is the reason for all this madness and folly, on the part of public men?

History teaches that "*Fraud*" is a weed of hasty growth. Like the mullen-stalk, it comes to maturity quickly—as a mullen-stalk its life is short. Like other weeds it thrives best amongst good plants. Therefore, the war against it is perpetual. Fraud is forever treated with scorn and ignominy, by all the world and its fellows too.

"*Honesty*" may be likened to an oak. Its growth to maturity is very slow, but the older it is, the stronger it is. It lasts for many seasons. And when it attains to full maturity, all the weeds of a summer cannot choke it. It is blessed and honored in its age by friends and foes alike. Thus says history. How can any man pause in choice between these two?

"Nothing is more essentially necessary to the establishment of manners in a State, than that all persons employed in stations of power and trust be men of exemplary characters. 'Let Valerian be Censor,' said the Roman Senators, 'who has no fault of his own.' "—*Burgh.**

DOOM OF THE WICKED.

The just need never fret over long-deferred, apparent non-punishment of wicked men. To punish evil is the prerogative of Heaven, and 'tis never neglected.

* Political Disquisitions, vol. 3, page 10.

Heaven seems over-patient sometimes, but we do not always see its scourging hand. Great villains are often permitted to rise high, that their tumble, being greater, may certainly destroy. Little tumbles never kill—they only hurt! They are sent by the kind consideration of benignant Heaven as punishments for little crimes. They serve to admonish, and often lead the wayward sinner back to virtue. Blessed be Heaven for the priceless privilege of little falls. Great falls are for the unrelenting sinner. Thus fell Lucifer and his host, from Heaven to hell!

Reader, you need not travel out of this City, and this Age, for prominent proofs of Heaven's relentless doom to great rogues. Who would take their tragic deaths, their seething consciences, and universal detestation, for all the treasures of Manhattan Island?

"'Till Heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.—*Sermon on the Mount.**

Ye who scoff at written law, take a glance at Nature, from the planets to the mite on earth. Look above you, and about you, for the *Truth.* What does the still small voice of Nature say? *Order! Order! Order!*

Let the globe but float from its circle, and approach the sun a tithe of its fixed distance, and Ether will be blackened by its ashes in the twinkling of an eye. Let the moth fly from its native element into the blaze of a candle, and death is the penalty. A fish out of water—a bird out of air, alike meet their doom. *Order* is the law—pain and destruction the penalty.

* Matthew, Chap. 5, verse 18.

So with men who defiantly walk away from fixed principles of Nature's God—men who *lie*, and *cheat*, and *steal*, and *murder*. Deviation leads to *pain* and *ruin*. It is inevitable!

Ye who believe it not, go search the pages of history, where the lives of men are recorded for three thousand years. And be convinced.

There you will find, from the hovel to the throne, when impious man persistently defies the natural laws of God, his doom may be read, branded on his face, by those who run. Satan sets his withering mark, and the miscreant is doomed. 'Tis but a matter of fleeting time.

It needs no prophet to point out men in this City, nay in the whole country, walking in high places to-day, whose doom is circumscribed within the narrow limits of a single decade.

Mark the prediction—ye who think! You will find them presently sinking out of sight, like pebbles dropped into unfathomed ocean. Oh! blind, ignorant, and impious men! Where are your God-given faculties of sense? Why choose ye the idiot's life, instead of the hero's?

"Whoever amongst us habituates himself to reflect most deeply and accurately on each several thing about which he is considering, he will make the nearest approach to the knowledge of it."—*Plato.**

* From the Phaedo.

WHAT IS A REPRESENTATIVE?

As the whole people of New York cannot assemble at Albany, " in one room," to make laws and declare taxes, it becomes necessary to send some neighbor or friend to act for them. Thus, one man is chosen by a number of people dwelling in a neighborhood. This chosen citizen is sent because the people trust him. They freely put into his care their property, their welfare, their honor. His charge is the highest in the land. It is the sacred trust of many men and many women combined.

What would be thought of a friend who—confided with our individual affairs—should basely barter those interests away, or put half of what he received into his own pocket?

We can hardly imagine a man sent to the Legislature in the past ten years, so base as to cheat his dearest, most confiding friend. [The writer has known many members, of each annual Legislature, since the year 1862, and he cannot think of one so base.]

Yet the perfidy of such a man is multiplied a thousand fold by the *corrupt representative*. *He* cheats, not one, but many thousands of confiding friends. Nay! worse than that, his example [being lifted to an eminence] becomes a public example, and corrupts the very State itself.

If there be a crime *deep-dyed*, and *cursed*, above another, it is *Corruption* in a *Public-man*. False to his Trust, to his Oath, to Himself, to his Friend, his Neighbor, his Country, his God, to Every thing—he stands the Symbol and the Prototype of Sin!

He is Satan's Captain-General, Prime-Minister, Chief Abettor. He is the Representative of the Devil, not of the People; and the curses of the People be upon his head forever! His ill-gotten gains will prove a ruin to himself, his example a destruction to those who follow him. Ask History if this be true!

Think of 160 Senators and members of Assembly going to Albany every year to cheat and rob 4,382,758* confiding friends and countrymen. What a Spectacle, if true!

"Such men would be worse than cannibals, who only eat their enemies to satisfy their hunger, and do not sell and betray their own Countrymen who trust them with the protection of their Property and Persons." †

A MONSTROUS ABSURDITY.

'Tis a monstrous absurdity, in our systems, that, with all the money paid by the people, for good government, the private citizen is left to prosecute corporate and individual scamps, at his own expense.

The first principle of government is to protect the citizen, in life and property. When it fails of this, 'tis worse than useless. We only consent, by taxation, to surrender part of our property yearly, that the rest may be fairly protected.

A great bulwark of good government is speedy pun-

* Report Ninth Census U. S., table 1, page 3.

† Cato's Letters, vol. 3, page 285.

ishment for the dissolute and bad. Government ought to do this, at its own expense, with speedy justice. It should not be left to the suffering citizen, for he is either too poor to bear it, or its magnitude appalls him. Thus nothing is often done, and corruption stalks on.

What so common in New York as this excuse for compromise with, or non-punishment of, rogues: "*that it is the cheaper way?*"

The continuance of such monstrous principles, will lead us to the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah, i. e., destruction by universal corruption in the end. The conclusion is irresistible, and cannot be denied.

"Whenever opposition is made to an apparently wise reformation, let the people look that corruption be not at the bottom."—*Burgh.**

A SINGLE CALAMITY.

While the mind rapturously dwells and lingers on the innumerable blessings of Reform, to all citizens; only a single calamity to any can be imagined, and that to but very few. Certain men, of both parties, would thereafter be compelled to drink beer or water, instead of champagne. Poor fellows! The generous heart of the public would deeply feel for them, knowing how severe these sudden changes are.

Some stomachs would certainly be astonished by the introduction of water, and this might occasion spasms. But, after all, physiology teaches it would be better for

* Political Disquisitions, vol. 3, page 327.

them in the end. Of course it would. Reform is salu tary for every man.

"Political philosophy lays this down as a fundamental and incontestible maxim, that all the most flourishing states owed their ruin, sooner or later, to the effects of luxury; and all history from the origin of mankind, confirms by this truth the evidence of facts to the highest degree of demonstration."—*Montague.**

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Just at this period, Heaven seems graciously to have arranged public matters to the hand of the Reformer.

Stiff party lines, hitherto so unrelaxing, are levelled and confused. Politics have swept around the circle. The Republican Ticket is headed by a Democrat—the Democratic ticket by a life-long Republican. Politicians are troubled—perplexed. The public looks on and ponders.

Now is the time for the people to make a local movement for *Reform*, not for *Relief*. Give the movement some fit title—put forward men in the city *known to be good*, and go to the people for support. Heaven and the People are with you, Reformer. And the World looks on!

"All Europe is at this moment beholding us, and looking for the issue of this controversy;

* On Ancient Republics, page 221.

those who hate free institutions, with malignant hope; those who love them, with deep anxiety and shivering fear."—*Daniel Webster.**

Reader, note you the signs of the times? Regard you the troubled looks of men? Noisy dissension has departed. The faces of men are fixed in anxious thought. Where are the wonted gayety, the careless indifference of the Business-man?

The Face of the Public is the Politician's Sky.

Wise pilots, in the political boat, had better not ignore yonder small cloud of "*Reform*" in the distant horizon. The voice of Nature cries—Beware! Anon, that little speck will overcast the sky! The mutterings of the storm have even now been heard, and old mariners may be seen [by those who look] reefing in their sails.

Look to your tackle, Politicians!

* Speech Feb. 16, 1833, on "The Constitution not a Compact between Sovereign States."

AN EARNEST APPEAL.

The writer appeals to the Committee of Seventy—to Wealthy Citizens generally—to Merchants and Manufacturers, to circulate this pamphlet among the People. It can do no harm.

Is it a wonder we have "Strikes," and spasmodic convulsions of the working people? Every effect has a cause.

They, in reality bear the burden of taxation. It falls upon them with an iron hand. They groan under it. We know that they do.

Look at the prices they pay for Rent, Fuel, Clothes, Hats, Shoes, Bread, Meat, Vegetables, Fruit. This is taxation, with no escape but privation.

See how patiently they toil for us the livelong day—in the sweltering heat—mid clouds of dust—under a burning sun; while we are protected by thick walls and pleasant offices.

See them crowded in narrow tenements—breathing fetid atmospheres, while we reside in spacious palaces and gorgeous homes.

Behold them dropping in our streets, under this summer's scorching sun, while we are driving in splendid equipages, with tinted sun-shades, along the sea-side beach, or amidst vernal freshness, and mountain scenery; listening to the songs of birds, or the murmur of waterfalls.

Think you not they are human, as well as we? Think you not Heaven regards us all alike? It is no argument

to point, in contrast, to the evils of the poor abroad. Americans ignore foreign barbarities.

We owe a duty to our emigrant laborers. The Creator has graciously sent them to us. They should be better instructed on moral and political topics by simple pamphlet literature. And this is the duty of the Rich and the Educated. You will accomplish more towards redressing the evils of Strikes, High Prices, Discontent, in this way, than in any other. A people must be led by logic, not driven by force.

It is simple common sense. Will the laborer vote to double his rent and his living expenses, except through gross misapprehension?

Instead of widening the breach by angry denunciations, let the employer show his men that interests are reciprocal. This may be done by studying the laborer's good, and by teaching him the logic of voting for honest representatives.

Show the laborer how *he* pays the taxes, and he will look who he votes for.

"Where no counsel is, the people fall."—*King Solomon.**

* Proverbs, Chap. 11, verse 14.

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